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UNCLAS ANKARA 001214

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TURKEY RESUMES LOADING OF JP-8 BOUND FOR
IRAQ/MNF-I, SOMO STILL WAITING

REF: ANKARA 1105

Sensitive But Unclassified.

1. (SBU) Turkish Customs confirmed to Ankara Economic Section that on Friday, March 4, Turkey ordered that fuel trucks providing JP-8 for MNF-I resume loading in Turkey, partially rescinding the GOT's March 1 decision (reftel) that all fuel trucks making deliveries to Iraq for SOMO and MNF-I would not be allowed to load their trucks until the large backlog of trucks waiting to cross the border into Iraq was reduced. The decision to resume truck loading followed Ambassador Edelman's meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Tuygan, in which he raised U.S. concerns that fuel trucks for MNF-I and SOMO were being singled out and that the stoppage could affect MNF-I operations in Iraq.

2. (SBU) Officials from Petrol Ofisi, the Turkish contractor for the MNF-I fuel deliveries, confirmed that they have been loading trucks with JP-8 since Saturday. However, they noted that Turkish Customs officials are not allowing them to reload trucks delivering diesel and Mogas; this includes all SOMO trucks. We stressed to Customs Acting Under Secretary Guler that preventing the loading of supplies for MNF-I was not a solution and that it was imperative to avoid disrupting supplies for MNF-I. Customs said this was understood.

3. (SBU) We will continue to press for a full resumption of loadings, but the shift of the backlog of trucks from the Iraqi to the Turkish side of the border seems to have changed the dynamics of Turkish concerns.

Baghdad Minimize Considered.
EDELMAN